

20 percent of their central [switching] offices capable of carrying high speed data within the first year after enactment. In the second year, that number would rise to 40 percent of the central offices, and in the third year, 70 percent. After five years after enactment, 100 percent of the offices must be able to provide high-speed Internet access. While this does not mean that 100 percent of the nation will be hooked up, it will make an enormous leap in availability.

The amendment is flexible in that it allows the Bell Operating Companies to provide service through alternative technologies other than Digital Subscriber Lines (DSL), which utilize copper and fiber telephone infrastructure, in meeting this requirement. If a company would like to provide wireless or satellite as an alternative to DSL, they can under my amendment. A failure to comply with the requirements could trigger substantial Federal Communications Commission (FCC) fines.

Finally, the amendment requires the affected companies to report annually to the FCC on progress in deployment of these services to the underserved communities.

I believe this is a reasonable approach, that simply holds the Bells accountable for what they have promised if they get relief.

The bill, with my amendment, was accepted by the Energy and Commerce Committee on May 9, 2001. The Judiciary Committee has also held a hearing on the bill and plans to consider it before it comes to the floor of the House for a vote later this summer.

The future of telecommunications is full of uncertainty as competing companies and industries try to anticipate technological advances, market conditions, consumer preferences, and even cultural and societal trends. Congress should work to ensure industry competition and to provide for service to all sectors and geographical locations of American society. I believe the bill, with my amendment, has the potential to reach this public policy goal.

STATE DEPARTMENT LETTER DESCRIBING RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION IN CHINA

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 13, 2001

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, as co-chairman of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus, I want to share a letter I recently received from the State Department regarding religious persecution in China. The letter notes that the State Department currently estimates that, "roughly ten Catholic Bishops, scores of Catholic priests and house church leaders, 100-300 Tibetan Buddhists, hundreds (perhaps thousands) of Falun Gong adherents, and an unknown but possibly significant number of Muslims are in various forms of detention in China for the expression of their religious or spiritual beliefs." An illustrative list of religious prisoners in China notes that many have been tortured to death or are serving sentences of up to 21 years for simply practicing their religion.

I look forward to the day when the citizens of China will be free to worship the religion of their choosing and enjoy the basic human right of religious freedom.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, DC, May 31, 2001.

Hon. FRANK WOLF,
Co-Chairman, Human Rights Caucus,
House of Representatives.

DEAR MR. WOLF: This is in response to your request of Acting Assistant Secretary Michael Parmly for additional information during his testimony before the Human Rights Caucus on May 15 on the status of religious freedom in China. We appreciate your concern about the recent deterioration of religious freedoms in China and the large number of persons held in China for the peaceful expression of their religious or spiritual views. We regret the delay in responding to your request for information, but we wanted to provide as comprehensive a list of these individuals as possible.

We currently estimate that roughly ten Catholic Bishops, scores of Catholic priests and house church leaders, 100-300 Tibetan Buddhists, hundreds (perhaps thousands) of Falun Gong adherents, and an unknown but possibly significant number of Muslims are in various forms of detention in China for the expression of their religious or spiritual beliefs. The forms of detention range from de facto house arrest to imprisonment in maximum security prisons. As you know, we regularly raise cases of religious prisoners with Chinese officials both here and in China. Our information about such cases comes from sources as diverse as religious dissidents, human rights NGOs, interested Americans and, most importantly, regular reporting from our embassies and consulates. Unfortunately, the opaqueness of the Chinese criminal justice system and absence of any central system that provides basic information on who is incarcerated and why makes it exceedingly difficult to determine the exact number of religious prisoners currently being held in China. We have, however, attached lists of cases of particular concern that we have raised with Chinese authorities or have included in our human rights and religious freedom reports.

We recognize the importance of compiling and maintaining a database of political and religious prisoners from additional sources such as Chinese newspapers and government notices and appreciate Congressional interest in providing us additional resources to fund such activities. At present, the Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor is discussing with the International Republican Institute a proposal which will be submitted through the National Endowment for Democracy. This proposal will be for a Human Rights and Democracy Fund grant specifically for the purpose of funding a U.S. NGO's efforts to develop and maintain a list of political and religious prisoners in China.

Such a database will be extremely valuable to the human rights work done not only by this bureau but also by other government agencies, the Congress, and NGOs. We welcome your interest in and support of this effort and look forward to cooperative efforts to develop and fund a comprehensive record of religious prisoners in China.

In the meantime, we hope the information in this letter and the attached lists are helpful to you. We would welcome any case information that you might have available that could improve the quality of this list.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL E. GUEST,
Acting Assistant Secretary,
Legislative Affairs.

Enclosure: Listing of Religious Prisoners in China.

ILLUSTRATIVE LIST OF RELIGIOUS PRISONERS IN CHINA

Note: See comments in cover letter. The following illustrative list is compiled from

various sources, including information provided to us by reputable non-governmental organizations and from the State Department's annual reports on human rights and on religious freedom. We cannot vouch for its overall accuracy or completeness.

STATUS

MUSLIMS

Xinjiang Abduhelil Abdumijit, tortured to death in custody.
Turhong Awout, executed.
Rebiya Kadeer, serving 2nd year in prison.
Zulikar Memet, executed.
Nurahmet Niyazi, sentenced to death.
Dulkan Rouz, executed.
Turhan Saidalamoud, sentenced to death.
Alim Younous, executed.
Krubanjiang Yusseyin, sentenced to death.

PROTESTANTS (MISC.)

Qin Baocai, reeducation through labor sentence.
Zhao Dexin, serving 3rd year in prison.
Liu Haitao, tortured to death in custody.
Miao Hailin, serving 3rd year in prison.
Han Shaorong, serving 3rd year in prison.
Mu Sheng, reeducation through labor sentence.
Li Wen, serving 3rd year in prison.
Yang Xian, serving 3rd year in prison.
Chen Zide, serving 3rd year in prison.

EVANGELISTIC FELLOWSHIP

Hao Huaiping, serving reeducation sentence.
Jing Quinggang, serving reeducation sentence.
Shen Yiping, Reeducation; status unknown.

COLD WATER RELIGION

Liu Jiaguo, executed in October 1999.

FENGCHENG CHURCH GROUP

Zheng Shuquian; reeducation; status unknown.
David Zhang; reeducation; status unknown.

CATHOLICS

Bishops

Bishop Han Dingxiang; arrested in 1999, status unknown.
Bishop Shi Engxiang; arrested in October 1999.
Bishop Zeng Jingmu; rearrested on September 14, 2000.
Bishop Liu; house arrest in Zhejiang.
Bishop Jiang Mingyuan; arrested in August 2000.
Bishop Mattias Pei Shangde; arrested in early April 2001.
Bishop Xie Shiguang; arrested in 1999; status unknown.
Bishop Yang Shudao; arrested Feb. 2001; status unknown.
Bishop An Shuxin; remains detained in Hebei.
Bishop Li Side; house arrest.
Bishop Zang Weizhu; detained in Hebei.
Bishop Lin Xili; arrested Sept. 1999, status unknown.
Bishop Su Zhimin; whereabouts unknown.

Priests

Fr. Shao Amin; arrested September 5, 1999.
Fr. Wang Chengji; serving reeducation sentence.
Fr. Wang Chengzhi; arrested September 13, 1999.
Fr. Zhang Chunguang; arrested May 2000.
Fr. Lu Genjun; serving 1st year of 3 year sentence.
Fr. Xie Guolin; serving 1st year of 1 year sentence.
Fr. Li Jianbo; arrested April 19, 2000.
Fr. Wei Jingkun; arrested August 15, 1998.
Fr. Wang Qingyuan; serving 1st year of 1 year sentence.
Fr. Xiao Shixiang; arrested June 1996, status unknown.